

SAINT CHRISTINA'S SCHOOL: EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

<i>Review Initiated by</i>	<i>Head / Chair</i>
<i>Last Review</i>	<i>Autumn 2018</i>
<i>Next Review</i>	<i>Autumn 2020</i>

This Policy is publicly available on the School website and on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Early childhood education is valued in itself and should not be seen merely as a preparation for the next stage of learning.
- 1.2. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In Saint Christina's School children start the Nursery class the September after they are three years old with a few starting part way through the year after their third birthday. They progress into one of two Reception classes the following September once they have turned four.
- 1.3. This policy has been informed by current DfE documentation and ISI Checklist for the Early Years Foundation Stage, September 2019.

2. Aims

- 2.1 The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- **A Unique Child** – who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** – through which children can learn to be strong and independent.
- **Enabling Environments** – in which children can learn and develop; their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- **Learning and Development** – children learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in EYFS provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

N.B (For the purposes of this document the term Parent(s) refers to the principal carer(s) of the child.)

3. Equality Statement

- 3.1. At Saint Christina's School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, special educational needs and disability, religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected with the School feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in School life.

4. Effective Early Years Education

- 4.1. Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements. At Saint Christina's School we believe that children develop rapidly during the early years – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Therefore, practitioners should ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued. Early Years experience should build on what the children already know and can do. No child should be disadvantaged. Parents and practitioners should work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- 4.2. To be effective, the EYFS curriculum should be carefully structured (recognising different starting points; relevant to levels of need). There should be opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that they plan or initiate for themselves. Practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children informed by knowledge of how children develop and learn. Well planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process. For children to have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment should be well planned and well organised. Above all, effective learning and development for young children requires high quality care and education by practitioners.

5. The Early Years Framework

- 5.1 The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage became affective from April 2017. At Saint Christina's School we adhere to this framework and the learning and development requirements. We promote the overarching principles and these guide our practice. These are:
- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
 - Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
 - Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and/or carers.
 - Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in EYFS provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- 5.2 All children in the EYFS have access to a broad, rich topic based curriculum both indoors and outdoors
- 5.3 Spiritual and Moral Development: All Foundation Stage Staff adhere to the Saint Christina's Religious Education Policy. At Saint Christina's School we follow 'The Way, The Truth and The Life' scheme for Religious Education. Within the Catholic ethos of the school, children are encouraged to develop an awareness and

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respect for themselves and others, valuing individuals and their groups with justice and fairness, developing a sense of awe and wonder, different cultural experiences and awareness, religious experiences, faiths and festivals. Children and staff in Reception join Key Stage 1 for assembly every Tuesday with Nursery joining on special occasions throughout the year. The Nursery and Reception classes attend a weekly Liturgy service and celebrate Mass with the whole school on special feast days. Every day starts and ends with a prayer and we say Grace before and after meals. The children in Nursery and Reception also take part in a daily period of reflection as a part of the 'Daily Examen'.

5.4 The seven areas of learning and development, in addition to Spiritual and Moral education, are:

- Prime area: Personal, Social & Emotional Development

Self-confidence and self-awareness: children are confident to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities. They say when they do or don't need help.

Managing feelings and behaviour: children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride.

Making relationships: children play co-operatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity. They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children.

- Prime area: Communication and Language

Listening and attention: children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.

Understanding: children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.

Speaking: children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

- Prime area: Physical Development

Moving and handling: children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.

Health and self-care: children know the importance for good health of physical exercise, and a healthy diet, and talk about ways to keep healthy and safe. They manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently.

- Specific area: Mathematics

Numbers: children count reliably with numbers from 1 to 20, place them in order and say which number is one more or one less than a given number. Using quantities and objects, they add and subtract two single-digit numbers and count on or back to find the answer. They solve problems, including doubling, halving and sharing.

Shape, space and measures: children use everyday language to talk about size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time and money to compare quantities and objects and to solve problems. They recognise, create and describe patterns. They explore 12 characteristics of everyday objects and shapes and use mathematical language to describe them.

- Specific area: Literacy

Reading: children read and understand simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.

Writing: children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

- Specific area: Understanding the World

People and communities: children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know that other children don't always enjoy the same things, and are sensitive to this. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.

The world: children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another. They make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur, and talk about changes.

Technology: children recognise that a range of technology is used in places such as homes and schools. They select and use technology for particular purposes.

- Specific area: Expressive arts and design

Exploring and using media and materials: children sing songs, make music and dance, and experiment with ways of changing them. They safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.

Being imaginative: children use what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, thinking about uses and purposes. They represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, dance, role-play and stories.

- Montessori Method and Learning: Saint Christina's School was originally founded on Montessori principles and the Nursery class continues this tradition by incorporating Montessori Practices into each day.

- 5.5 **Specialist teachers and extra-curricular opportunities:** As well as specialist teachers and whole class lessons for P.E, music and movement, Spanish and Computing during the school day, children in the Foundation Stage also have access to a variety of after school clubs such as ballet, Irish dancing and sports to further their interests and development.
- 5.6 **Characteristics of Effective Learning:** The Characteristics of Effective Learning are the key principles which underpin the child's foundation for successful lifelong learning. These are also vital elements of support for the transition process from EYFS to Year 1. The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes. Information describing the child's Characteristics of Effective Learning will provide Year 1 teachers with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs.
- Playing and exploring – engagement
 - Active learning – motivation
 - Creating and thinking critically – thinking

6. Play

- 6.1. Play underpins the delivery of the EYFS and as Foundation Stage practitioners we understand play is central to young children's development and educational growth. During play children develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. Well thought out continuous provision and well planned activities, both indoors and outdoors, supports children's learning through play to ensure that they are learning at the highest level. Both within the continuous provision and planned activities the focus is on supporting and extending the children's current development through their own interests. This allows them to engage in higher level learning through play both independently as well as with input from adults.
- 6.2. Within our Early Years setting the children have access to the outside in all weather. All children in Nursery and Reception have their own waterproof clothing and footwear and all weathers are utilized for their valuable learning opportunities. With our canopied areas we are also able to offer the children shelter all year. Local areas such as Primrose Hill also offer us the chance to extend our learning environment and the children's experiences.

7. The Learning environment

- 7.1. We understand the importance of an environment that is inspiring and stimulating and encourages the children to be independent. Therefore, we strive to provide an environment which is safe and secure, where the children can play, explore, experiment, develop confidence, be curious and learn. We foster autonomy and therefore, resources are clearly labelled for the children's ease of accessibility.
- 7.2. In the Early Years setting, indoor and outdoor learning have equal value. The outdoor environment has characteristics and features which offer opportunities that the indoor setting cannot provide. The outdoor area offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and energetic. The activities and resources available for the children outdoors, help them to develop in all 7 areas of learning. Nursery and Reception children take part in weekly Forest School sessions run throughout the year our Nursery teacher Fran Randle – an accredited Forest School leader.

8. Planning, Assessment & Record Keeping

- 8.1 At Saint Christina's School, teaching staff first identify the children's individual and collective interests and use these as a starting point to inform planning. These interests, along with the knowledge and understanding of the child's development and progress informs weekly planning. The teacher may alter these plans on a day-to-day basis response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children as well as using 'in the moment' planning to effectively respond to a child's input and extend their learning. Staff ensure that all children are encouraged to experience all the areas of activity during the week, although they may not experience them each day.
- 8.2 We ensure our day offers a balance of child-initiated and adult-led based activities. We use small group or whole class times as an opportunity to encourage a particular aspect of learning or to discuss a particular topic. In Nursery and Reception, we encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. In Reception, the children are introduced to a more structured day and the activities are directed and differentiated as well as being more teacher led.
- 8.3 Planning is continuously informed and guided through daily observations and these feed into the Early Years assessment and reporting system used to track the child's overall progress. Throughout the year we carry out both formative and summative assessments.
- 8.4 Teaching staff observe the children closely and attach relevant assessments of the seven areas of learning and of the characteristics of effective learning to the Early Excellence Tracker (EExAT). The initial assessment made of each child is marked as their baseline. Teachers assess progress across each year to the end of the EYFS using 6 monthly development milestones, culminating in an EYFS Profile Score.
- 8.5 EYFS Profile - The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. We record each child's level of development against the 17 early Learning goals as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.
- 8.6 In addition to the EYFS Profile, parents in Reception receive an annual report at the end of the summer term that offers comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. In Nursery, parents receive an annual report commenting on the child's Characteristics of Effective Learning, as well as the specific areas. Both reports highlight the child's strengths and development needs, as well as giving details of the child's general progress and next steps.

9. Meeting the diverse needs of our children

- 9.1 We are committed to providing a learning environment for all, where the most able, those who have English as an additional language, the less able and children with learning difficulties or disabilities work alongside each other and are catered for with differentiated approaches.
- Parental involvement in a child's education is paramount to their success and happiness in school. We therefore work closely with parents to ensure we are meeting a child's needs together.
 - All children's progress is tracked and observed and those that need extra support are identified and supported by the teacher in the classroom or the SENCO that can either work alongside the child during class or in individual sessions.

- There are twice yearly Pupil Review sessions during which children are discussed in-depth by the class Teacher, the Head Teacher and the SENCO.
- All children and families have access to a Speech and Language Therapist and weekly sessions are available either in a small group or 1 to 1 with the therapist. Children with identified needs also have access to a visiting Occupational Therapist if required.
- We are able to offer support and guidance to families that display a need for specialist involvement.

10. Positive relationships

10.1 In the Foundation Stage we recognise that children learn best when they are happy, safe, their individual needs are met and they are able to develop secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. All staff understand the importance of developing excellent relationships with the children.

11. Parents as Partners

11.1 We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We always make time for parents at Saint Christina's School and they are free to discuss their child's development and relating issues, or concerns as necessary. Staff are approachable and love to share with parents children's achievements and successes.

- Parents of Nursery children starting school are invited to attend a 'Starting Nursery' meeting.
- Parents of Nursery children starting school are offered a home visit before their child starts in September.
- Parents of Reception children attend an introductory meeting before the term starts in September. Parent Teacher meetings take place in the in the autumn term.
- All children receive a written report at the end of the School Year.
- Parents receive weekly class updates, half termly class newsletters and termly curriculum outlines.
- Parents are invited to access the observation portal where they can view their child's observations within school and upload some from home.
- We welcome parents into the classroom to share their knowledge, read stories and to celebrate festivals from around the world with us.
- Opportunities arise throughout the year for parents to accompany us on outings.
- All parents are invited to join the school's thriving Parents' Link association. Each class has a nominated Parents' Link representative who liaises between the parents and the school and organises social and fundraising events.
- Throughout the year there are a range of activities to which families are invited to share with the Foundation Stage and the whole school; Class assemblies, Sports Day, Christmas celebrations and discos and parties which are organised by Parents' Link.

12. Transitions

12.1 Foundation Stage practitioners understand that transition periods can be an unsettling and apprehensive time for children and their families, therefore we try to see transitions as a process rather than an event.

Nursery

Parents are invited to a 'Starting Nursery Meeting', offered a home visit before September and are provided with an Introduction Booklet and additional useful information regarding supporting their child at home in preparation for school. Children and their parents are invited to visit the Nursery to experience our setting, play with others, and for parents to meet. In addition, for up to three weeks we provide a settling in period

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in which the school day is gradually extended. This allows the children to gradually learn their new routines, and get to know their new teachers and friends.

Transition from Nursery to Reception

The Nursery Staff put great consideration into the transfer of the children into the Reception Classes. Once their classes have been allocated, the outgoing Nursery class attend an orientation afternoon, to meet their new Reception teacher at the end of the summer term and begin to explore their new classroom. Parents are invited to attend an introductory meeting before the term begins. Similar to Nursery, the children's school day is gradually extended over a three week period but parents have the option for their children to stay full-time from the start of the term.

Transition into Key Stage 1

In the summer term, Nursery and Reception and Year 1 staff meet to transfer information/records and discuss the new children entering their class. Information shared includes;

- Foundation Stage Profile results
- Significant Events Folder
- Work Samples
- Assessments

12.2 We endeavor to prepare children for the formalities of key Stage 1 by increasing the structure and types of activities by the end of the Summer Term in Reception.

13. Admissions

13.1 Children are not assessed or ability tested for Saint Christina's Nursery or Reception places. Admission is purely via the general criteria set out by the Governing body. We are proud of our non-selective policy and the fact that we accept a range of learning abilities at Saint Christina's.

13.2 The Reception Classes each can hold 22 children, and admission, like Nursery, is subject to availability. Nursery children are given automatic entry into Reception.

14. Staffing ratios

14.1 The Nursery Class has one teacher, one nursery nurse and one teaching assistant. Additional support is sourced as required to ensure we stay comfortably within ratio. Each Reception Class has a designated teacher and one fulltime teaching assistant in each class (including a Pediatric First Aider).

14.2 We uphold the required adult to child ratio at all times in all EYFS classes both inside and whilst outside; 1:13 with a teacher present and 1:8 with other suitably qualified staff. Therefore, there is always adequate supervision to ensure that the needs of the individual children being cared for are met and that their learning and play is supported and developed.

15. Safeguarding and Welfare

15.1 In the Foundation Stage we understand that we are legally required to comply with Safeguarding and welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017. We adhere to all guidance and procedures outlined in our school Safeguarding and Child Protection school policy which takes full account of the child protection procedures agreed by the Bi-Borough (Westminster and Kensington and

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Chelsea) which is our Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership, statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), and the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019).

15.2 Corporal punishment is not used at Saint Christina's School.

15.3 We understand that we are required to:

- Keep children healthy, safe and secure.
- Our school policy includes the use of mobile phones, mobile devices and cameras in our setting and also an explanation of the action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.
- Manage behavior effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs including children with special educational needs. (See Behaviour policy)
- Have a whole school policy on the use of physical restraint.
- Any use of force by staff will be reasonable, proportionate and lawful. Reasonable force will be used in accordance with the DfE guidance Use of Reasonable Force (see Saint Christina's School Physical Contact Policy) and only when immediately necessary and for the minimum time necessary to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following:
 - a) committing a criminal offence
 - b) injuring themselves or others
 - c) causing damage to property, including their own
 - d) engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to good order and discipline at the School or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom or elsewhere.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so and each child has been assigned a key person.
- Adhere to the first aid/medical and medicine requirements through our whole school procedures and policies (see First Aid Policy)
- Provide children with access to drinking water throughout the day.
- Smoking is against the law and is not allowed on the premises when children are present or about to be present.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose and carry out all necessary risk assessments.
- Our School Trips Policy refers to transporting children in the EYFS and includes specific directions for trips that involve EYFS children e.g. ratios etc.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Related policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid policy
- Pupil Contact Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Supervision and Missing Child Policy
- Drop off & Collection Policy

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- IT Policies
- Trips and Expeditions Policy
- Behaviour and Exclusions Policy
- SEND Learning Support Policy
- Assessment and Record Keeping
- Equal Opportunities (Single Equalities) Policy
- Drugs and Substance Abuse Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy